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PROCEEDINGS AND ADDRESS
OF THE
SABBATH CONVENTION
ASSEMBLED IN CHAMBERSBURG,
JANUARY 26, 1848.

A Convention, composed of delegates from the counties of Franklin, Perry, Adams and Dauphin, to take into consideration such measures as might best promote the proper observance of the Sabbath, met in the borough of Chambersburg, on the 26th of January, 1848.

The Convention was temporarily organized, by calling the Rev. George Morris, of Cumberland county to the chair, and the Rev. J. N. Hoffman, Secretary.

The credentials of the delegates were then handed in and their names called, when on motion, T. J. Cooper, J. Linn, S. W. Hays, Rev. Alfred Nevin and John Clendenin were appointed a committee to nominate officers for the permanent organization of the Convention.

A letter from Rev. Dr. S. S. Schmucker was read, excusing his absence from severe indisposition of some members of his family.

During the absence of the committee the Rev. O. S. Powell, by request, addressed the Convention, presenting a general view of the progress of the Sabbath cause during the past year, showing the difficulties to be encountered, the encouragement offered, and the importance of activity on the part of the friends of the cause.

The committee to nominate Officers made the following report, viz :

FOR PRESIDENT,
FREDERICK SMITH, of Chambersburg.

FOR VICE PRESIDENTS,
Dr. SAMUEL AGNEW, of Greencastle,
J. M. AWL, of Harrisburg,
S. M. ARMSTRONG, of Chambersburg,
JOHN M'GINLEY, of Millerstown, Adams county,
WILLIAM HEYSER, of Chambersburg,
J. L. DIVEN, of Perry county,
T. WARREN, of Gettysburg,
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, of Chambersburg.

FOR SECRETARIES,
Rev. JOHN N. HOFFMAN, of Carlisle,
JOHN A. WEIR, of Harrisburg,
Dr. A. RANKIN, of Newville.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE,
Rev. Dr. DE WITT, of Harrisburg,
Rev. R. GRACY and Hon. GEO. CHAMBERS, of Chambersburg,
Dr. R. G. YOUNG and WM. FETTER, of Silver Spring,
W. W. PAXTON, of Gettysburg.

On motion, the report was adopted, and the officers took their seats.

The following persons appeared and took their seats as Delegates to the Convention, viz:

From the German Reformed church of Chambersburg.—Rev. A. Nevin, Rev. Samuel R. Fisher, B. Wolff, Rev. B. S. Schneck, G. P. Etchberger, Hon. James Nill, James Chariton, John Smith, Dr. A. H. Senseney, Adam Vanderau, Wm. Heyser, and Henry Ruby.

From the Methodist Episcopal church of Chambersburg.—R. Cunningham, Wm. Davis, Jas. S. Black, W. Reilly, M. P. Welch, J. Mead, J. W. Reges, Geo. Heck, James King, James Wright.

From the Associate Reformed church of Chambersburg.—Rev. R. Gracey, Thos. Carlisle, John Armstrong, S. M. Armstrong, A. L. Irwin, J. N. M'Geehen, J. H. Reed, J. S. Ross, W. Armstrong, J. Johnston.

From the Presbyterian church of Chambersburg.—Hon. Alex. Thomson, Geo. Chambers, H. Crawford, Rev. D. M'Kinly, Wm. Reed, Wm. M'Clintick, J. X. M'Lanahan, J. F. Denny, Jas. Watson, Hugh W. Reynolds, Wm. Clark.

From the Lutheran church of Chambersburg.—Frederick Smith, Philip Berlin, Jacob Heck, F. Spahr, M. Nead, G. K. Harper, H. B. Davison, H. Clunk, D. Dechert, A. Bernhart, Rev. D. Smith, Rev. S. Sprecher.

From churches of Gettysburg.—W. W. Paxton, T. Warren, C. W. Hoffman, Robert Armor, T. J. Cooper, F. Benedict, A. C. Wedekind, Wm. M. Baum.

From Associate Reformed church at Newville.—Rev. Mr. Sharp.

From Carlisle.—Rev. J. N. Hoffman.

From Middle Spring Church.—Rev. John Moody, J. M. Means, R. S. McCune, Wm. Linn, David R. Renshaw, Jos. Johnston, Samuel Swansy.

From the church at Greencastle.—Dr. S. Agnew, J. Waddle, Jas. Davison, Rev. Mr. Rebough, Rev. Mr. Eyster, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Dietrich.

Big Spring Presbyterian Church.—Rev. Robert M'Cachen, J. Davidson, Wm. Reed, Dr. A. Rankin, Geo. Harlin.

From Fayetteville Presbyterian Church.—Geo. Henderson, Isaac Hawn, Robert Black, Jasper Black, E. R. Horner, Rev'd. Mr. Kennedy, Robert McLean, Jas. Cummings, Jacob Byers, Robert Renfrew.

Landisburg, Perry County.—J. L. Diven, J. A. Linn, Joseph McClure, Alexander Sharp.

Great Conewoga.—Jos. Hill, J. L. Nealy, H. King, King McElroy.

Strasburg.—Frederick Kremer, Dr. J. Hunter, J. McClelland, Samuel Cormany, Frederick Carper, Wm. Dice, Joseph Light, Wm. Fetter, R. H. Anderson.

Mercersburg.—Rev. Dr. Schaff, Rev. W. Phillips.

Harrisburg.—Rev. Dr. DeWitt, J. M. Awl, S. W. Hays, John A. Weir, Rev. J. Miller.

Fairfield, Adams County.—Rev. D. D. Clark, Col. J. D. Paxton, J. Weldy, Amos McGinley, Jno. McGinley.

Silver Spring Church.—Rev. George Morris, Col. John Clendenin, Dr. Robert G. Young, Geo. Keller.

Philadelphia.—Rev. O. S. Powell, Rev. Mr. Howell, Rev. W. L. McCalla.

On motion, it was resolved that all friends of the Sabbath present be invited to take seats, and participate in the proceedings of the Convention.

On motion, the Rev. Robert Morris, Rev. A. Nevin, Rev. Dr. DeWitt, Rev. R. Gracy and Dr. J. Hunter, were appointed a committee to prepare an Address for the Convention.

The business committee then presented the following resolutions, which were taken up and read separately, viz:

1. *Resolved*, That the Sabbath, or the religious observance of one day in seven, as a day set apart for the special worship of Almighty God, is a duty incumbent on the whole family of man—divinely imposed—moral and perpetual in its obligations. Which was advocated by the Rev. W. L. McCalla, and unanimously adopted.

2. *Resolved*, That the command requiring the specific day of the week on which the Sabbath is to be observed, is a positive precept, and that the change of the day of its observance, from the seventh to the first day of the week, does not interfere with its unchangeable morality, but is a most appropriate and emphatic commemoration of the event that completed and sealed the work of our redemption, viz: the resurrection of the crucified Redeemer. Advocated by the Rev. Mr. Sharp and Rev. Robt. Morris, and unanimously adopted.

3. *Resolved*, That in view of the permanency of our free institutions of Government which place all on an equality of rights, and open equally to all our citizens the vast fields of enterprise, furnished by the great extent and increasing population of our country—the Sabbath should be regarded as a peculiar and invaluable blessing to us, inasmuch as its regular observance tends to arrest the tide of worldliness which would otherwise overwhelm those moral and religious principles which constitute the support of our laws, and the basis of our national welfare. Advocated by the Hon. Geo. Chambers, and unanimously adopted.

4. *Resolved*, That as the right observance of the day is in a great measure dependent on the power of principles and habits formed in childhood, it ought to be recognized by parents, Sabbath-school teachers, and the guardians of the young as a very prominent duty, to train them early to the practice of conscientiously and carefully attending to all its privileges and duties.

After considerable and interesting discussion, unanimously adopted.

5. *Resolved*, That as the purity and permanence of free institutions cannot be maintained without knowledge and virtue pervading the mass of the people; and as these cannot be diffused without the enjoyment of the privileges of the Sabbath—no enlightened and consistent patriot, and especially no avowed follower of Christ, will feel at liberty to neglect or trifle with the requirements of the fourth commandment.

Advocated by the Rev. Messrs. Sharp, McKinley, Sprecher and others, and unanimously adopted.

6. *Resolved*, That the Sabbath is an invaluable boon to the laboring portion of society, and that to require or tempt them to prosecute their secular toils on that day, is inflicting on them a grievous wrong, and is subversive of public order and national virtue. Adopted unanimously.

7. *Resolved*, That the conscientious performance of the various duties belonging to the Lord's day, by all classes of the community, naturally begets and fosters that veneration for law and the judicial functions, which will ensure an impartial administration of justice, and preserve inviolate our civil rights and liberties.

Advocated by Hon. A. Thompson, and unanimously adopted.

8. *Resolved*, That the Sabbath is the most powerful guardian of the sacredness and inviolability of the domestic relations, and the nursery of the social virtues, and that no country can be distinguished by the happiness of its homes and the harmony of its society, unless its inhabitants yield a pains-taking obedience to the duties which it involves. Unanimously adopted.

9. *Resolved*, That if our great thoroughfares are to be instrumental in diminishing and destroying that veneration for the Sabbath which characterized the founders of our Commonwealth, they will be a curse and not a

blessing, to our community—they will be channels for the diffusion of vice, degradation and death. Adopted unanimously.

10. *Resolved*, That the Sabbath is not merely a positive and arbitrary institution, but is based upon the physical and mental constitution of man, and its observance is essential to the highest physical and moral well-being of the human race. Unanimously adopted.

11. *Resolved*, That the manifest connection between the neglect of the Sabbath and abandonment in crime, should lead all, and especially professors of religion, to be vigilant and prayerful, lest they countenance the more open violations by thinking their own thoughts, or speaking their own words. Unanimously adopted.

12. *Resolved*, That this Convention respectfully recommend that all societies and military companies refrain from appearing in procession on the Sabbath for any purpose, even for the interment of the dead. Adopted.

13. *Resolved*, That as the law of God, and of the several States require a cessation of secular labor on the Sabbath or Lord's day; and as the regulations of the general and State Legislatures in regard to their own sessions, are in accordance with these laws—and as the rest of that day is a privilege to which all our citizens are equally entitled—and as large Conventions in various parts of our State have recommended, through the Canal Commissioners, that our public works be closed on the first day of the week—and as the cessation of business during that day, on various Canals and Railroads, in this and other States, has operated to the manifest advantage of all interests concerned in the trade of those thoroughfares—and as numerous signed memorials have, during the last few years, emanated from boat and Railroad laborers—from transporters and merchants in this and other States, asking such suspension of labor—and as the present system operates to the injury of the public works on the Sabbath, and places those who rest on that day, in obedience to the laws of God and the Commonwealth, in very disadvantageous circumstances in comparison with those who disregard those laws, as well as to drive conscientious men from our public works—and as we cannot expect Providential favor to attend the violation of His laws, and the oppression of our State laborers, it be recommended to the State Legislature to direct that the public works be closed on the first day of the week, or Lord's day. Adopted unanimously.

On motion, it was resolved that a copy of the 13th resolution be forwarded to the Speakers of both Houses of the Legislature, with the request that the same be read to both Houses; also, copies to the Governor and Canal Commissioners.

14. *Resolved*, That a committee, consisting of the Hon. George Chambers, Frederick Smith and Wm. Heyser, be appointed to prepare an Address to the Directors of the Cumberland Valley Railroad Company, requesting them to suspend running their cars on the Sabbath. Adopted unanimously.

The Committee to prepare an Address, made a report through their Chairman, Rev. Geo. Morris, which was read and unanimously adopted.

The following persons were appointed a Committee, to call another Convention of the friends of the Sabbath, at such time and place as they shall deem best, viz:

Rev. D. D. Clarke, Rev. J. N. Hoffman of Cumberland county, Rev'd. W. Philips, Rev. S. Sprecher, Rev. A. Nevin, of Franklin county, J. M. Aul of Dauphin county, Samuel Small and Gen. Fetter, of York county.

A D D R E S S ,

In addressing this Convention, your Committee are of opinion that its members should be reminded of the divine authority of the Sabbath, and its perpetual obligation. For if it be not of divine origin, this meeting is an idle display and a foolish waste of time. The first account of its institution is, as you are aware, in these plain but memorable words, "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made. and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he rested from all his work which God created and made." It was thus solemnly set apart to holy uses by the Lord Jehovah. It was conferred as a distinguishing privilege on our first parents in Paradise, ere sin had withered its beautiful scenes, or polluted its moral loveliness. If it was deemed necessary for man, while reflecting distinctly and perfectly the image of Jehovah, how imperatively necessary must it be for him, now that that image is effaced, and his energies are enslaved to Satan and the world?

The very fact, that the Sabbath dates its origin from the commencement of the human race, at once precludes the idea of its being intended for the benefit of any one nation, or of its obligation being confined to a definite period of time. The reason assigned for its institution, has no reference to the state of man as innocent or guilty, and consequently is independent of any types or ceremonies, shadowing forth the great facts and blessings of the New Testament dispensation. It is a reason which applies with equal force to men of every nation under heaven, whether Jews or Greeks, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. The Creation is a work equally interesting to the whole human race, and the acknowledgement of God as our Creator, is a duty in all ages and in all countries, equally incumbent on every individual of mankind. It has been justly remarked by Mr. Haldane, "that two great laws were delivered to man at the beginning, in both of which God asserted his sovereignty. The first was the appointment of a Sabbath, or seventh day's rest; the second was the law of marriage. These two ordinances were instituted as the foundation of that relation, which was to subsist between God and man, and of every relative connexion among men. They were coeval in their appointment with the existence of the human race upon earth, and must subsist while man has a being on it."

It is no argument in favor of its Jewish origin, that in the book of Genesis no explicit mention is made of any of the patriarchs observing the day. It should be borne in mind that that book comprises a history of nearly 2400 years, and it ought not therefore to be matter of surprise that in so brief a compend, such silence should be maintained with respect to its observance. There are, however, traces of its existence in the early division of time into weeks, as repeatedly

mentioned in the narrative of the deluge and in the peculiar phrase, "process of time" which occurs in Gen. 4 : 3. This is literally rendered end of the days, and is supposed to specify the end of the week, or the Sabbath as the time when Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to Jehovah. But the question of its primæval origin is set at rest by the express testimony of God to the Jews, in the 16th chapter of Exodus. The people are directed to gather as much manna on the sixth day as should supply them on the seventh, and the reason assigned is : "This is that which the Lord hath said, to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord; on that day ye shall not find it in the field; for the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the 6th day the bread of two days." The narrative evidently supposes that the Sabbath is a divine ordinance, with which the people are well acquainted; for the well known sanctity of that day is brought forward, to account for the extraordinary quantity of manna which was found upon the ground on the day preceding it. It is worthy of notice, that this first gathering of manna was in the second month of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt; and at Sinai, where the law was given, they arrived not till the third.

Hence we see the force of the word, *remember*, with which the fourth commandment begins. It was not a new law, but an authoritative reiteration and enforcement of a law which had been enacted from the beginning.

A second argument in support of its divine origin and abiding obligation, is, that the Sabbath found a place not in the ceremonial, nor in the political code of the Israelites, but in the moral law, usually called the Decalogue. This law, consisting as it does of duties that necessarily arise from the relations subsisting between God and men, and those which link man to man, is an unchangeable standard of right and wrong, and obligatory upon men of every tribe, country and age. We see throughout the whole line of the Jewish history, that it stood separate and alone, and that high pre-eminence was assigned to it above the other codes. Neither the ceremonial nor the political, which were confessedly peculiar to the Israelites, and which retained their authority only during their existence as a separate nation, were proclaimed by the voice of God, written by the finger of God on tables of stone, and solemnly deposited in the ark of the covenant. These three honors exclusively belonged to the moral law. Why were the ten commandments proclaimed with such awful majesty, and accompanied with the heavings of an earthquake, while the lightnings flashed and the thunder roared, but because free from all local and national peculiarities, they were designed to be binding upon all men, and binding through all the ages of time? If applicable only to the Jews, why did Jehovah condescend to write them with his own finger, on two tables of stone? And why did he enshrine them in that sacred chest, which foreshadowed their fulfilment in the person, life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ? Now the fourth commandment shared these three honors with the other nine. It must, therefore, be of universal and perpetual obligation. If not, it seems

passing strange that it should occupy so conspicuous a place in that register of duties, all of which have the substance and the irrevocable permanency of moral principle. We may, therefore, with as much consistency talk of the fifth precept, honor thy father and thy mother, as a Jewish institution, as represent the Sabbath in that character.—What sacrilege would it have been deemed, what a shocking act of impious daring, had an Israelite, impatient of the restraints of the Sabbath, rushed into the holy of holies, lifted up the golden lid—the mercy seat that covered the ark, and erased from the table of stone, the very letters with which the finger of God had inscribed it!—What shall we say then of those, in modern times, who tell us that the Sabbath is obsolete, because a fragment of the perishable ritual of Judaism, while the other nine precepts still maintain their authority and binding obligation upon all, whether Jews or Gentiles, Heathen or Christians?

A third argument in support of the perpetuity of the Sabbatic institution, is the prediction of its observance by the Old Testament Prophets, when describing the scene of the Gospel dispensation, Isaiah 56: 2—8 inclusive. The illustration of this we at present postpone.

Another argument in favor of the permanent obligation of the Sabbath, is the teaching and conduct of our Lord with respect to it. No one can attentively survey his public ministry, without perceiving, that it was one prominent object of his parables and discourses, to impart to the people sound views of the moral law. By parables and cogent reasoning, he cleared away the rubbish of the traditions of the elders, by which the Scribes and Pharisees defaced its excellence and impaired its authority. He availed himself of every occasion to bring out its heart-searching spirituality and comprehensive bearings, by showing to them, that its precepts were not confined to any nation or to any period of time, and that love was the essential element, the very soul of acceptable obedience.

In reply to the momentous enquiry of the young man, “What must I do that I may inherit eternal life;” we find the great Teacher assigning to the moral law the first rank in the scale of duties. He does not direct his attention to the ceremonial rites, and enjoin upon him costly sacrifices, but at once brings him into contact with the ten commandments. And when in a spirit of self-delusion, the youth unhesitatingly averred, that he had obeyed all the precepts of the second table, how skilful and searching the test which our Lord applied to him, “go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor.”—How directly calculated was this demand to unveil the essential defect of his obedience, to convince him that it was hollow and worthless, because it lacked the vital element of love.

Now, if our Lord was at so much pains to rectify their false notions of the spirit and design of the commandments, then surely we might reasonably expect him to throw the fourth out of its high place among them, had he viewed it as a mere ceremonial observance, and intended that it should pass speedily into desuetude. But he gives not the slightest intimation of any coming abolition. On the contrary, when

predicting the appalling scene of the destruction of Jerusalem, which was designed entirely and for ever to abolish the Mosaic ritual of worship, he plainly teaches his disciples, that the Sabbath would retain its authority, by enjoining them to pray that their flight be not in the winter nor on the Sabbath day; for the one would be a physical and the other a moral impediment to their escape.

What an emphatic testimony does our Lord here give of his high regard for the Sabbath, and of his determination to perpetuate it, throughout every age of the kingdom which he was about to establish. In the midst of the turmoil of that awful crisis, which was to extinguish the last lingering relic of the pompous ritual of the Jews, he urges them to pray, that Providence might so arrange the opportunities and means of escape, as not to break in upon the sacred hours of his own day or interfere with their diligent improvement of its privileges.

There is, however, we apprehend, a vague notion abroad, that our Saviour *did*, by his teaching and example, *modify*, if not abrogate the Mosaic precepts respecting the Sabbath, that he *did relax the strictness* with which the Jews were required to observe it. That this impression is altogether erroneous, will appear to any one who impartially examines our Lord's discourses and conduct in reference to this institution. The evangelists record eleven occasions on which he manifested his views respecting it. Between the first and second Passovers of his public ministry, three occurred, which are all recorded in the 4th chapter of Luke. Four took place between the second and third Passovers, narrated in John 5: 5, &c. Luke 6: 1—5 Mat. 12: 9—21, and Mark 6: 1—6. The remaining four occurred during the last year of his life, and are recorded in John 7: 21, &c. John 9: 1, Luke 13: 10—17 and 14: 1—6. A pains-taking examination of these various passages will convince any one, that our Lord in no instance lowered the standard of Sabbath sanctification, but that the sole design of his instructions and doings was to clear away from this institution the superstitious rites and false glosses of the Pharisees, and to restore it to that pristine purity in which it was established in Eden. True it is, that the readiness with which he performed miracles on the Sabbath, repeatedly exposed him to the charge of profaning the day; but in repelling those charges, our Lord retorts upon them their own usages and practices, which they conceived to be entirely accordant with the sacredness of its rest. His argument was substantially this. If I by such works profane the Sabbath, you do it also by certain works of yours, which you acknowledge to be perfectly lawful. And the very hypocrisy of these Jews which our Lord had to expose, lay in this, that they proceeded to charge him as a Sabbath-breaker, when they themselves *might have known, when they themselves did know*, that in cases precisely parallel to those of our blessed Lord, the Sabbath was not broken by works which they were in the habit of performing.

Another argument by which he vindicated his own conduct and that of the disciples, when they plucked ears of corn, was the decla-

ration of the Prophet Hosea. 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.' This was a principle which pervaded all the laws of the Mosaic economy, moral civil and ceremonial. In none of them did Jehovah ever betray the slightest desire to injure unnecessarily the well-being of his creatures, and consequently works of necessity and mercy were always in perfect accordance with the strictest prohibitions of labor on the Sabbath. The silence of the Pharisees under this appeal to the Prophet, was triumphant proof of the soundness of the principle, and of the legitimacy of its application to this class of works.— Their silence proves also, that it was no new or unheard of principle—nay, their own treatment of the ox or the ass that should fall into a pit, was conclusive evidence, that it was a principle which they not only received, but habitually carried into practice. It is a great mistake, therefore, to suppose that the Jews in any period of their history were prohibited from doing any work of necessity or mercy during its holy hours. So far from this, they were often informed by their Prophets that such works were as perfectly congenial with its august solemnities and hallowed repose, as prayer or praise.

Another argument, by which he vindicated his conduct, was founded on the design of the institution. This is his emphatic and solemn asseveration, The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. It was made for the well-being and happiness of the human race, and for no one age and for no particular nation. It was made for man as a compound being, constituted of both soul and body, and therefore kept distinctly in view the interests of both parts of his nature, the maintenance of which is essential to his well being. The wants of the body cannot be overlooked without unhinging the mind, and rendering it less capable of engaging in the exercises and experiencing the joys peculiar to the day.

This is a sublime view of the perpetuity and beneficent design of the Sabbath. This institution having been originally made for the good of man, it follows, that the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath. He became the Son of Man for the purpose of redeeming him from the curse of the law, and restoring him to Paradise.— Having fulfilled the demands of the law in the room of apostate men, he was entrusted with all power in heaven and on earth, to secure the effectual application of the redemption which he achieved, to as many as the Father had given him, and therefore orders all things in the Gospel dispensation for the welfare and salvation of lost and helpless man. The Sabbath is one of the chief instrumentalities which he employs in enlarging and perpetuating his kingdom, and being the Head of the Church and having all things put under him, he has authority to explain its injunctions, to free it from the burdensome rites engrafted upon it by men, and to make it, by a change of the day of its observance, one of the distinctive duties and privileges of his universal and spiritual economy.

In fine, the very fact, that our Lord was solicitous, and even embraced every opportunity to spread correct views of this institution, demonstrates that, so far from degrading it to the level of a mere ceremonial

rite, he regarded its observance as a sign between himself and his followers, throughout all the ages of time. We do not find him manifesting the same anxiety to preserve in their purity mere ceremonial observances. When he rectifies the erroneous opinions of the Pharisees, respecting alms, fasting, and prayer, we rightly judge that he deemed these duties perpetually incumbent on his people, and that consequently his instructions would be profitable in all time coming. When he swept away from the fifth commandment the vain traditions of the elders, by which its import was observed and its obligations diminished, not one iota of the law itself was removed.—No one supposes that filial obedience is a Jewish precept, or that the strictness of the commandment enjoining it, is in the least degree relaxed. Is it not preposterous, then, to infer from the frequency and preciseness of his explanations of the 4th commandment, that he designed to set it aside or lower its claims? And this inference is the more absurd, when it is apparent, that all his reasonings proceed on the assumption of its permanent obligation.

Our last argument in favor of the perpetuity of the Sabbath, is, that the change of the day of its observance, by divine authority, at the commencement of the Christian dispensation, *instead of interfering* with the moral nature of the fourth commandment, *strengthens its obligation, and yields an additional and powerful motive to its obedience*, inasmuch as it commemorates the accomplishment of the plan of human redemption. That the great Head of the Church did transfer the day of its observance from the seventh to the first day of the week, is evident, we think, from the following facts, which we shall do little more than enumerate. On the day of his resurrection, our Saviour manifested himself four times before its close to his disciples, and thus by his own example set apart the first day of the week to be the Christian Sabbath. The first appearance was to the two Marys; the second to the three women; the third to the three disciples that were travelling to Emmaus; and the fourth to all the disciples when assembled for social worship—John 20 : 19 and 26. And after eight days again (the Jews including the portion of the days from which and to which they reckon) his disciples were within and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. For a whole week did our Lord purposely seclude himself, that he might shew marked respect to the day, which he chose for the occurrence of the great event of his resurrection. This second meeting on the same day of the week, says Paley, has all the appearance of an appointment, a design to meet on that particular day. Another substantial evidence of our Lord authorising the change, is the fact, that he fulfilled the great promise which he had so solemnly made to his disciples in his valedictory address, on the first day of the week. He poured out upon them, in unparallelled measure, the influences of the Holy Ghost, which qualified them to commence forthwith publishing the gospel in its purity throughout the world. The day of Pentecost, it has been ascertained, fell on the first day of the week, and

then we are told that they were all with one accord in one place, probably engaged in social worship, and it may be, wresting in prayer for the bestowal of the precious and expected boon. When we bear in mind, that the gift of the Holy Ghost is next in value to the gift of the only begotten Son of God, that the moment it was conferred, the religion of Christ started on its glorious career of making known to men of every kindred and people the glad tidings of the great salvation, designed for the whole family of man, and that, its immediate result was the conversion of 3,000 souls; we cannot avoid concluding that the Pentecostal effusion was designed to hallow and set apart the first day of the week as the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath, commemorative of the resurrection of Him who bestowed it.

On the first day of the week, the disciples of our Lord having assembled at Troas, Paul preached unto them; and it would seem from the narrative, that he deliberately paused on his journey, that he might have an opportunity of addressing them all on their usual day of public worship, and the day following, we are told, he departed.— On this day of the week, when the Church at Corinth was in the habit of observing divine ordinances, Paul directed that a custom common on the Jewish Sabbath should be kept up on the Christian, viz, that collections should be made for the poor saints.

And, finally, towards the close of the first century, the Redeemer honored this day by choosing it as the season for displaying to his beloved Apostle the glory of his exalted state in heaven, and for favoring him with those sublime visions of far distant scenes which complete the canon of the inspired writings. In the year 96, John thus solemnly records, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day." Long before this time this appellative must have been the usual designation of the Christian Sabbath, otherwise his language would not have been intelligible to his readers. And how significant and emphatic is this appellation? It intimates that the entire day is consecrated to the honor and service of the Redeemer. Just as the last solemn rite, instituted by our Saviour, receives the name of the Lord's Supper, because the bread and wine are, by prayer, set apart to commemorate his death; so the Sabbath, on the first day of the week, receives the name of the Lord's day, because it was set apart by our Saviour and his Apostles to commemorate that event, which at once sealed and completed the work of man's redemption, namely, the resurrection of the crucified Jesus.

There are some, however, who deny that these facts are conclusive evidence of the divine authority of the change of the day of Sabbatic observance, and they insist upon demanding an explicit abrogation of the seventh day and an open announcement of the first day of the week, as its authorized successor. In reply, it may be stated, that we have no right to dictate to Jehovah, how he must reveal his will. In whatever mode his will is manifested, if it is with such clearness as to exclude all reasonable doubt, it is equally binding with an express legal enactment. It is an understood and universally received principle, that what was done by our Lord and by his Apostles when under the influence of inspiration, has *all the authority of*

an explicit command. We have seen that our Saviour, who is not, like Moses, a servant, but has power "in his own house as a Son," paid special respect to the first day of the week, and that his Apostles were in the habit of assembling the disciples on that day for the purpose of celebrating the ordinances of the Góspel. Is it within the range of probability, that they would have ventured to make this alteration without express directions from their heavenly Master? (which might have been given between his resurrection and ascension.) But even allowing that they did, it should not be forgotten that they were under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, and were as really the source of legislative authority as Jesus Christ himself. They were the rulers whom He had himself appointed, and it was a prominent part of their apostolic office, to set all things in order which pertained to the worship and government of that new and spiritual economy, which they were to be employed in establishing.

Another objection to the divine authority of the transfer of the Sabbath to the first day of the week, is, that the seventh day is precisely specified in the fourth commandment, and that the slightest alteration would be incompatible with its moral nature which is unchangeable. Admitting that the fourth commandment of the Decalogue *does determine the precise day* of the week on which the Sabbath is to be observed, we may remove the objection, by remarking that it is partly positive and partly moral. The moral part is the requisition by Jehovah of one whole day in seven to be devoted to religious worship and exercises; the positive part is the specification of a certain day of the week, viz, the seventh. Both are alike obligatory, but both are not equally permanent. A positive precept is based on the sovereignty of God as supreme Ruler of the universe, and may be repealed or annulled when it seems right to his infinite wisdom and goodness; but a moral precept is founded on the relations of man to his Maker and fellow creatures, and cannot be abrogated until those relations be annihilated. Hence it appears that the prescribing a particular day of the week for the observance of the Sabbath, is a mere *circumstance*, which depends on the direct authority of God, and may be altered by Him without in the least disturbing or modifying the essential element of the fourth precept of the Decalogue, viz, the devotement of one whole day in seven to the worship of God and the other exercises of piety.

There are some theologians of established reputation, who deny that the fourth commandment does prescribe any particular day.—According to them, it simply states, that after every six days of secular toil, there shall be one day of holy rest, without pointing out any of the days of the septennary cycle on which the Sabbath is to be kept.—"The fourth commandment, says President Edwards, does not determine which day of the week we should keep as a Sabbath, but only that we should keep every seventh day, or one day after six.—It says, six days shalt thou labor and the seventh thou shalt rest; which implies no more than that after six days of labor we should, upon the next to the sixth, *rest*. The words no way determine

where these six days should begin, nor where the rest of the Sabbath should fall ; that is supposed to be determined elsewhere. The precept is to be taken generally of such a seventh day as God should appoint or had appointed."

The Christian Sabbath, according to this interpretation, is as much the seventh day as the Jewish Sabbath was the seventh day. It is kept after six days labor, as that was. When our Lord, therefore, singled out the first day of the week, as the day on which his followers were to rest from labor, he did not alter a solitary word of the fourth commandment. It remained pure and entire as he uttered it with his own voice 1500 years before. There was a change of the day, for the Christian Sabbath waited, as it were, until its Lord arose from the dead, and the authority of the seventh day Sabbath upon the Gentile believers, might be said to become extinct on that day, during the whole of which our Lord lay in the grave ; but according to Edwards, Holden, and others, this change did not conflict either with the spirit or letter of the fourth commandment.

Having thus ascertained that the change of the day is by no means incompatible with the essential morality of the Sabbatic institution, a consideration of the design of the change, will at once satisfy us of its propriety, and of its direct tendency to deepen upon the hearts of the disciples of Christ a sense of their obligation to dedicate it to his service. The design of the transfer was to render the Sabbath more distinctly commemorative of that event, which completed and sealed the work of man's redemption, viz, the resurrection of the crucified Jesus. It should ever be borne in mind, that the work which the Father gave him to do *was not finished* when he expired on the cross. His burial and sojourn in the tomb for three days, were part of his humiliation, and necessary to meet the demands of the Law. The surety of sinners was not discharged from all the claims of law and justice, until the Father rolled away the stone from the sepulchre and raised him from the dead. It was by this act, that Jehovah set the seal of his approbation upon the atonement which he had wrought out by his obedience unto death, and declared to the whole world, that he had made an end of sin and brought in an everlasting righteousness. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul strongly avers, that preaching is vain, and faith is vain, if Christ be not risen ; and why ? because if that event has not occurred, we have no evidence that the claims of the law and justice of God have been satisfied, or that his atonement has been accepted. Now, the resurrection, which consummated and ratified the plan of human redemption, took place on the first day of the week. This, therefore, was the most appropriate day for the Sabbath under the Christian dispensation. As, in the beginning, the Almighty set apart the seventh day to be the Sabbath, because on that day he rested from all the works which he had created, so Jesus set apart the first day as the Sabbath, because on that day he rested from the still greater and more marvellous work of the new creation. On that day he rose as the Representative of his people in every age, and by his resurrection secured their final and eternal

salvation. His resurrection, therefore, is the grand foundation of the hope of all who are united to him by faith. On the day of his resurrection he entered into his rest, and therefore, says the Apostle in Hebrews, ch. 4: 9 and 10, there remaineth, under the New Testament dispensation, the keeping of a Sabbath to the people of God.

In all ages the Sabbath has been commemorative of some signal event, which displayed the perfections of Jehovah and conferred invaluable benefits on men. During the Patriarchal economy, it brought before the minds of the worshippers, the perfections of Jehova has displayed in the vast fabric of the universe, and especially his goodness to man, in assigning him so high a position in the scale of created beings. Under the Mosaic economy, while it still remained a memorial of the creation, it directed the minds of the Israelites more intensely to that signal event, which gave rise to their political existence as a separate nation, under the immediate sovereignty of God, and which set them apart to be a holy nation—a peculiar people—the depository of divine truth, and the guardians of the pure worship of the true God. That event was their complete emancipation from the oppressive bondage of Egypt, achieved for them by the outstretched arm of Jehovah, when he conducted them safely across the Red Sea, and inflicted vengeance upon their relentless oppressors, by sinking them like lead beneath its proudly rolling waves. This is the principal reason by which the fourth commandment is enforced upon them in Deut. chap. 5th, 14 and 15. This gracious deliverance, unfolding as it did much more clearly and fully the moral attributes of Jehovah, than the work of creation was calculated to deepen their conviction of the absurdity of idolatry and its gross superstitions, and to inspire them with more cordial submission to the authority, and more confiding trust in the goodness and faithfulness of the God that made heaven and earth. Hence the design of their Sabbath worship was not only to give expression to their gratitude for the distinguishing and invaluable privileges conferred on them, but by the purity of their worship to protest against the gross and revolting abominations of surrounding idolatry. Under the Christian economy, a more stupendous work than either of these is to be celebrated, viz, the complete and everlasting redemption of sinners through the death and resurrection of the Son of God. This redemption as far excels that which delivered the Israelites from the galling bondage of Egypt as eternity exceeds time, or heaven transcends earth. It affords by far the brightest and most attractive display of the harmony and glory of the excellencies of Jehovah, and bestows blessings upon man inconceivable in value, the most secure in their tenure, and lasting as the throne of God. If the Jews, because of their freedom and lofty elevation above all other nations, felt themselves more strongly bound to keep the Sabbath, how much more deeply should those who have been ransomed from endless misery by the blood of Immanuel, and have been emancipated and regenerated by his spirit, feel their obligations to revere and keep holy the whole of their Lord's day. Thus we find, that under every dispensation of reli-

gion, the Sabbath was a memorial of blessings received, and that each dispensation succeeding the first, added new gifts and enhanced the binding authority of the holy institution.

Who then can doubt that the Sabbath is of standing obligation under the New Testament dispensation, and that all, who enjoy its light and privileges, are bound to the original institution of keeping one day in seven; and that their proper Sabbath is the first day of the seven. By keeping a Sabbath we acknowledge and declare that we are not atheists; by keeping one day in seven we protest against idolatry, and acknowledge that God who made the heavens and the earth; and by keeping our Sabbath on the first day of the week we protest against Judaism, and acknowledge that God who, having made the world, so loved it as to give up his only begotten Son to redeem apostate men. The observance, therefore, of the Lord's day in the Christian church, is a public weekly assertion of the two first articles in the Apostle's creed, the belief in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.

We have deemed it proper to dwell the more largely upon the arguments that establish the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, because we apprehend that there is secretly cherished by not a few of the members of the Church of Christ, as well as by the virtuous part of the community, *a vague sentiment of this kind*, that Christianity has not only changed the day of its observance, but has even relaxed the strictness with which it should be kept. It is supposed that the Apostles appointed the Lord's day, as a substitute for the Jewish Sabbath, merely to secure a weekly opportunity of worshipping the true God, and of diffusing among all classes of society the precious truths and precepts of the Gospel. According to them, it is a mere conventional arrangement to maintain the ordinances of religion, and there is no sacredness belonging to the day, demanding that its hours in private should be as faithfully and diligently employed in devotional exercises, as those which are spent in the great congregation. With the exception of the brief space of time occupied in the services of the sanctuary, they conceive themselves at perfect liberty to devote it to social visits, gossiping, and all kinds of amusement, which are not positively sinful. But, in what part of the sacred volume, does this loose view of the day of rest receive the smallest sanction? In what part of the New Testament is the fourth commandment abridged or repealed? Both our Lord and his Apostles uniformly recognize the universal obligation of the Decalogue, as the supreme and unchangeable law of Jehovah. Paul indignantly repels the notion that Christianity, because it teaches that no man can be justified by obedience to its precepts, absolves men from their obligation to obey. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. Now in the preceding context it is abundantly evident that he means the moral law. If then its authority, as the rule of all inward and outward holiness, is confirmed by the Gospel, the obligation to keep holy the Sabbath so far

from being set aside, is established by the Gospel. It is true that there is no re-enactment of the Sabbath law, but neither is there of the law against image-worship. And is it not a striking and emphatic proof that the fourth commandment still retained, undisturbed, its place in the Decalogue, and the whole of its original authority, when Paul, in his Epistle to the Gentile believers at Ephesus, speaks of the first commandment with promise? For being the *first* of the commands that prescribe the relative duties, it pre-supposes that those which specify our duties to God had preceded it, and that none of them had been dispossessed of its place in that unalterable code.

It is true that this same Apostle says to the Colossians, Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which *are a shadow of good things* to come: but the body is of Christ. The Sabbath days here may refer both to the *seventh day* rest, and to the beginning and close of the Jewish festivals, which were also called Sabbaths. Both of these were peculiar to the Hebrews, and not at all incumbent on the Gentile saints. The connection, however, shows that he did not refer to any part of the moral law, for none of its commandments are a shadow of things to come. He is plainly speaking of the ceremonial law, which, in the preceding verses, he states had been annulled by the sacrifice of the Redeemer on the Cross. Can we for a moment suppose that he intended to absolve the Gentile converts from the fourth precept of that law, which he, in another Epistle, pronounces to be holy, and just, and good; and the knowledge of whose precepts he affirms to be indispensably necessary to the discovery and conviction of the criminality of sin? (Rom. vii: 7, 12, 13.) The conclusion of the celebrated Richard Watson, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, is not less just than forcibly expressed: "Whoever denies the obligation of the Sabbath on Christians, denies the obligation of the whole Decalogue; and there is no real medium between the acknowledgment of the divine authority of this sacred institution as a universal law, and that gross corruption of Christianity, generally designated Antinomianism."—We repeat it, then, that there is not a passage of the New Testament which affords the smallest countenance to this lax notion of the Lord's day. We justly deem it one of the most impious and audacious crimes of the Church of Rome, that she dared, in some of her catechisms, to expunge the second commandment; and what can we affirm of this vague notion of the Christian Sabbath, but that it is a covert and indirect attempt to expunge the fourth commandment from the immutable standard of right and wrong, and thus to invade the prerogative and undermine the authority of the King of Zion?

How numerous and melancholy the testimonies which the page of history furnishes, of Jehovah's deep abhorrence of this lax view of the Sabbath, and of his unalterable purpose to execute vengeance upon those who indulge in the sinful and licentious practices to which it leads. Look at France, Holland, Switzerland and Germany, where it early obtained a footing, and soon pervaded all classes of the in-

habitants, and how speedily did the churches there make shipwreck of the faith, forsake their first love, and become content with a name to live, while they were dead.

What ignorance, superstition and spiritual desolation deface and pollute those densely peopled countries, which once bid fair to be fruitful like the Garden of the Lord, and whose soil was hallowed by the blood of thousands of confessors and martyrs, who unshrinkingly died in behalf of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Behold the condition of the Church of England. For more than a century, religious service was performed in the great majority of her churches, only once every Lord's day, and the people dismissed to their dwellings, to spend the remaining hours in festivity and mirth. And what was the dismal result? James Hervey could not count amongst her 16,000 clergy more than a very few who preached the doctrines of the cross, and it is well known that the great mass of the community were sunk in a state of almost heathen ignorance and insensibility when Whitefield and Wesley arose.

To this hour the mass of the population of England are experiencing the blighting and pernicious effects of a half-Sabbath observance. King James the First, gave his royal sanction to the publication of the Book of Sports, the object of which was to exhibit a catalogue of the games and practices in which the people of the land might indulge after they had attended the morning service of the church; and that book was re-published by his son, Charles the First.

This impious and legalized desecration of the Christian Sabbath, was one of the principal controversies between the semi-popish party headed by Arch-bishop Laud and the Non-conformists or Puritans, and the latter never ceased to lift up their voice in solemn protestation against it. And here it is worth while to advert to the close and inseparable connection between profound reverence for the Lord's day and enlightened views of personal and civil Liberty. The Puritans were most conscientious in keeping sacred to the service and glory of God the private hours of the Sabbath as well as the public, and they were actuated by an inextinguishable love of Liberty, and by an utter contempt for the dogma of the divine right of unlimited monarchy. But the Scottish Malignant and the English Cavalier, the favorites of Charles I. and Charles II., united in their characters the grossest flattery of absolute monarchy and spiritual tyranny, and an utter contempt for common decency, in their intemperance and revels.

Let the truth then go forth, settled and firm, that the foes of the Sabbath are, generally, the friends of despotism in Church and State; and that the most enlightened and staunchest supporters of civil and religious liberty, are those who keep sacred to devotional exercises the whole of that day which the Lord hath made. Let us imbibe the moral courage of the Puritans, who, in spite of the ridicule of the gay, and the oppressions of tyranny, upheld the sanctity of the entire day, and let us prove ourselves to be the staunch guardians of the rights and liberty of man, by entering deeply into the spirit and faithfully performing the duties of the day, which is a memorial of

the spiritual emancipation of our race from the galling yoke of Satan and the degrading fetters of sin. Let us not shrink from evincing our reverential regard for this institution, because it may bring upon us the charges of fanaticism, superstition or Pharisaic austerity, but on the contrary, let us count it matter of gratitude and joy, when our conscientious attention to its private duties marks us out as separate from the world, and devoted to our once crucified but now risen Redeemer.

While it is a fact, that the great majority of the inhabitants of this highly favored land, professedly hold the permanent obligation of the Sabbath, yet how awfully prevalent are its violations! Whither shall we go and not find examples of these? What place is exempt from sights and sounds of Sabbath desecration? We turn away in utter loathing and disgust from the haunts of dissipation, and the dens of sensuality, where thousands upon thousands, every week profane its holy hours, by steeping their minds in vice, and degrading themselves beneath the level of brutes. Behold! how the inventions of art are ungratefully turned into outrageous disturbers of its tranquil hours and sacred devotions, and are careering the news from city to city, with enforced acceleration, to provide fresh aliment for souls that cleave to the dust, and whose loftiest aim is political power or the accumulation of wealth. The lovers of pleasure, the agents of business speed their needless way over land and water, striving all they can to forget the Sabbath, and to banish it from the minds of their fellow-men. Sabbath-traffic though forbidden by law, lurks in our streets; and not a few who call themselves by the name of Jesus, either themselves go boldly to the Post-Office to send and receive letters and newspapers, or do what is worse, send the young men in their employ—thus adopting the best expedient that human ingenuity could devise, to set aside the mandate, “set your affections on things which are above,” and to strike deeper into the earth the roots of their inordinate attachment to wealth and fame.

Nor can we forbear to notice that, without the plea of necessity, the marriage ceremony, and the funeral procession, to save a week-day hour, are appointed on the Lord's day, which almost invariably divert the attendants from the house of God, and set them directly on the way of finding their own pleasure and speaking their own words, instead of summoning them to prepare to meet their God.—Against the toleration and sanction of such evils, we lift up the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. In no portion of its pages can they obtain either countenance or exculpation.

But while we testify and warn you against evils like these, which, with a high hand and an authoritative front it may be, invade our Sabbath rest, we are not less bound to expose inattention to its peculiar duties, even where there is no open or offensive violation. For what avails it, that the business of the world is suspended, if the proper business of the Sabbath is left undone? The required cessation from worldly employments and recreations, releases indeed from incompatible engagements, and leaves one in a condition for entering on the

proper duties of the Sabbath, but does nothing more; and in this position, should the mind remain unoccupied, and the thoughts be misapplied, the mere bodily resting were but a *worthless and a wretched* thing. We say *wretched*, for it is universally felt and confessed that truly wretched is the state of those who, shut out from the pursuits of the week-day calling, do not supply their place with the heart-stirring interests that Sabbath duties involve.

In noticing prevailing omissions of its appropriate exercises, we would advert chiefly to those which may be witnessed among the members of evangelical churches. Our reason for confining the enumeration to this class, is the well known fact, that upon them principally, if not exclusively, rests the arduous task of correcting and elevating the tone of public opinion respecting this essential part of morality.

And instead of enumerating all the inconsistencies which deface their Sabbath observance, we would single out that which, in a great degree, is the cause of them all, *the want or weakness of a devotional spirit*.

The Lord's day ought emphatically to be a day of praise and prayer. Accordingly we find that two of the most sublime and thrilling odes of the sweet singer of Israel, were composed for this specific day, as models of our Sabbath devotions; we mean the 92d and 118th Psalms. Yes, the Lord's day, as commemorative of that august and joyful event—the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which constituted Heaven's seal of approbation upon the work which the Father gave him to do, calls for devotion early and late, devotion in the closet, in the family, and in the house of God. On that day the redeemed of the Lord should pray always and not faint. The meditations of the day, the social intercourse, the whole carriage and conduct in public and in private, should be characterized by devotion, for if that be wanting, how can the services of religion, appropriate to the day, the family worship, the secret prayer, the scripture reading, and church solemnities, be adequately fulfilled?

Nay, wanting the principle of devotion, all will be neglected, or gone about in a mechanical or drivelling manner, unprofitable to the performer, and dishonoring to the King of Zion.

We have heard of the intense and wrestling supplications of the Puritans and Covenanters on the Lord's day. We have read of the strong crying and tears with which their prayers were offered to the Lord God of Sabaoth; of the melody which reverberated from the bleak mountains and the huge rocks that overhung the secluded glens where they sung the songs of Zion; of the unquailing courage with which they were enabled to confront their merciless persecutors, and of the cheerfulness with which they parted with goods, the endearments of home, and life itself, in faithfully carrying out their solemn league, to preserve Christ's crown untarnished, and to maintain his precious truths and public ordinances in their scriptural purity and heaven-born simplicity. Do we resemble them in the intensity and regularity of their Sabbath devotions? Or rather, must we not con-

fess, that the spirit of devotion hath greatly left us, and the very aspect of it, too seldom solemnizes our public assemblies. It is often plainly, palpably absent in the gathered flock, seldom visible in the individual family apart. Hence the deficiency of paternal instruction, of regular catechizing, of faithful and affectionate counsel to the rising generation. Almost the whole of its sacred time is consumed by many parents in the public services of the sanctuary, so that no place is found for those momentous duties, in their domestic arrangements.—The morning and evening sacrifice, indeed, is still offered by a goodly number among us, but it is to be feared that a large portion of parents do not count it an honor to combine in such services the offices of prophet, priest and king to their families; and that they appease their consciences for their criminal negligence, by transferring their children, for a few hours every Sabbath, to the care of comparative strangers.

Oh! it is fearful to witness the absolute indifference with which not a few behold, every week, their sons trampling upon the sacred hours of God's day, although the criminal records of our country furnish melancholy proof of the direct and almost irresistible tendency of Sabbath desecrations in youth, to lead to the perpetration of the most heinous crimes in maturer years—crimes which had to be expiated by the gloom of a dungeon, by banishment, or by death.—Are there not some fathers, who, amidst the stilness and solemnity of the Sabbath, tell their children to pray, and yet are never seen by their little ones to bow the knee, not even on a sacramental day, when they went to the table of the Lord, or brought their offspring to the baptismal font?

Thus prayerless at home, how unprepared come they to the house of prayer? There, under luminous expositions of divine truth, nothing is learnt savingly and to profit; there, under thrilling appeals to the conscience, no solemn or permanent impression is produced. To a people thus lifeless and undevout, the sanctuary feels as a house of bondage, and though in compliance with custom, and from a regard to their reputation, it is their manner to resort to it, very small matters are made to serve as an excuse for non-attendance,—a little excess of heat or cold, a boisterous wind, a shower of rain, or perhaps but a dark cloud coming up the sky, constitute a powerful reason for an often-recurring absence. The fatigues of labor are pleaded by some, and the delicate lassitude and refined languor that result from doing nothing, deter others, and the fear of being impolite to a stranger that has visited them, is urged by others, and thus do thousands of immortal souls, during every Sabbath, keep carelessly and obstinately away from the wells of salvation. And how do they spend the day, when thus culpably absent from the courts of the Lord?

O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon, what these professed disciples of the Saviour are guilty of while at home, instead of being in the sanctuary, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

They may be so far deluded as to imagine, that their dosing, dreamy mode of keeping the Sabbath, is freedom, *delightful freedom*, compared with the austerity and gloom of a whole day sanctification.—But do austerity and gloom necessarily enter its devout observance? Far from it. Its exercises are so varied that they do not sink into monotony, and they are full of sublime interest and fraught with enjoyment. When the Creator had finished his work, it is said, he rested, and was refreshed. When our Lord had accomplished the work given him to do, he also rested, and his rest was glorious. The Infinite mind contemplated the ancient creation and beheld it as very good.—The Author of the new creation, saw in it an untold amount of good, that satisfied him for the *travail of his soul*; and into a rest resembling in blessedness that of God the Father and God the Saviour, may we be said to enter, when keeping the Lord's day in a proper spirit. For what have we so much to do on that day as to contemplate the new creation, and to rejoice in the wondrous scheme of redeeming grace, resting in its provisions, and refreshed with its manifold promises of things present and things to come. We see it to be very good, and over its riches and moral beauty, the eye of faith expatiates with fresh and ever deepening delight. Our duties vary, but none are irksome; we confess our sins and short comings, we cease from our own works, and lay hold by faith of the sacrifice of the Redeemer, and clinging to it, we enter into a rest satisfying to the soul and endless as its existence.

Accepted in the Beloved, and the spirit of adoption dwelling within us, we look up to the Almighty Creator as our Father and unchangeable Friend—we love to draw nigh to the mercy-seat, and in secret to pour forth our hearts in importunate intercession for the dead in sin under our roof, and for a perishing world. We joy when it is said to us, go up to the house of the Lord, that along with others we may hear his word of truth, and engage in the exercises of adoring praise and undissembled joy. In those sacred hours and employments, the spirit breathes in a holy atmosphere, reviving to the grace of the new man. The duties we engage in are so interesting, the hope, which is founded on the resurrection of Jesus, is so ennobling and transporting, that none but souls destitute of religious feeling can be dull—none, but the alienated from God can tire of the exercises congenial with the day. Surely it is not without reason, that we are bid to call the Sabbath a delight and honorable—it is an emblem of the Sabbath of eternity.

And is there, we ask, in this abstraction from worldly cares, and entire abstinence from levity, in this contemplation of a risen Saviour, in those endearing communings with God, and those closet wrestlings that he would unveil to us in his courts his own ineffable glory, and the greatness of his salvation—is there in those deep longings for the meetness indispensable for heaven which the Holy Ghost inspires, or in the delightful foretastes of its inconceivable joys which he imparts—is there here aught to cover the countenance with gloom, or to depress the spirit with sadness?

Pharisaic rigor, and cold formality, without a free and willing mind, may exhibit to the world a picture of Sabbath observance repulsive in all its features. But in a devotional frame, such as we have attempted to sketch, (and what believer may not possess and exhibit it?) there is nothing to darken or discolor the fairest scenes of social life, to check the expansion of its purest affections, or spoil the creature of its richest happiness. Indeed such Sabbaths on earth are preparations and preludes for that which is to be hereafter—the rest below is but the vestibule, through which we enter the rest of the celestial temple.

Why, brethren, should any of us wish to shorten so desirable a rest, and reckon it joyless? Why should we countenance and encourage the more open violations of the day, by thinking our own thoughts, doing our own ways, finding our own pleasure, speaking our own words?

O, how great is the loss of spiritual attainments and rich consolations, which each of us has incurred, by our remissness and indolence during its holy hours. The spirit of Christ has been grieved, and we have walked in darkness and seen no light. We have sunk down into the feebleness of infants, in our exertions to do good to the immortal souls around us. Is it, or can it be matter of wonder, that amidst so fearful a lack of devotional exercises, so many hundreds of the ministry of reconciliation should be forced to exclaim, in agony of spirit, “Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”

In conclusion, we would remind those who make no pretensions to piety, that it is as indisputably incumbent upon you to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as it is not to swear, not to kill, not to steal. You must first assume the impious arrogance of the Man of Sin, and expunge the fourth commandment from the decalogue, before you can consistently absolve yourselves from its perpetual obligation. You are not your country’s friend, if you hold up to reproach and public censure a faithful enforcement of the duties of the Sabbath, as an encroachment on liberty of thought and action. In striving to undermine its authority, you are putting forth a ruthless hand to shake one of the strongest pillars of the temple of morals, and to spread insubordination and misrule throughout the land. Be assured no country shall gain by desecrating Heaven’s ordinance, nor shall man or woman, no, nor child, do it with impunity. Be persuaded, ye stout-hearted, to yield to your Creator and Preserver that day, which he calleth his own. Let his recorded judgments upon Sabbath-breakers, and his awful denunciations, alarm you and arrest your profanations, if his goodness fail to subdue.

Ministers of the gospel, office-bearers in the church of Christ, Parents, Teachers of youth, men in authority, owners and managers of public works, reverence the Lord’s day yourselves, and aid us with your influence in all our plans and efforts to maintain its sacredness. Countenance our endeavours to recall all classes of the community to a becoming reverence for the Lord’s day and its solemn ordinances.

If men will not be reclaimed, if they protest against any interference with evils that sap the foundations of civil order, and vitiate the public conscience, and bring communities to dissolution and ruin, be not ye at least patrons of this iniquity and partakers in other men's desecrations, lest ye share in the awful punishment that awaits them.—If you cannot deter others from offending, let your own houses be clear. Every well regulated family not only saves itself, but quickens and invigorates the conscience of a neighbourhood. Its shining example holds up a moral mirror to show the Sabbath-breaker his own deformity, a sight which produces self-condemnation, and, if amendment do not follow, operates at least as a salutary restraint. Hold up, then, this fair example, and however painful the vigilance and strict the self-denial which may be indispensably requisite, rejoice in the assurance, that then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and God will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

APPENDIX.

An erroneous impression prevails with regard to the views which the Reformers of the 16th century generally entertained respecting the obligation of the Christian Sabbath. To set the public mind right on this topic, Dr. Candlish of the Free Church of Scotland, gave utterance, about a year ago, to the following remarks before a large public meeting in Edinburgh: "I think it right to state generally, as there is no time to illustrate and establish it, that there are two principles to be borne in mind in reading the works of the Reforming Divines in reference to the Sabbath-day. The first of these is, that they very generally had to argue the question of the position of the whole law, the matter of the sinner's acceptance with God, and very often the parts that are quoted in a garbled way, parts that seem to speak slightly of the law of the Sabbath, form part of the argument in which they were engaged as to the position of the whole moral law, in the matter of the ground of a sinner's justification. The other principle is this, that the Reforming Divines very generally held, that the Sabbath, up till the time of our blessed Lord, had a twofold character. They held, that the Sabbath had a ceremonial character on the one hand, and that the day became more or less part of the Jewish institution, and they contended and held, on the other hand, that it had a strictly moral character as a part of the eternal laws of God. Now, in arguing this point, whether they were right or wrong, they were accustomed to establish, that the Sabbath, in so far as it was part of the ceremonial law of the Jews, was abolished; but never, without holding at the same time that the Sabbath continued still binding as part of the eternal law of Jehovah. I am most earnest that both the friends and the foes of the Sabbath should have correct information upon this matter. I dread the rushing in of the tide of latitudenarianism, among professing Christians upon this point. I dread the introduction of a sad and dismal antinomianism. Some entertain the notion that the Scottish Reformers stood singular in respect to the recognition of the sanctity of the

Sabbath. Now, history can be brought to establish, that the Reformation Churches generally were unanimous in regard to the place to be given to the Sabbath as a part of the holy law of God. Those continental notions of the Sabbath, which some are anxious to identify with the opinions of Luther, Melancton, Calvin, and other Reformers, are the growth of a rationalistic age; they are the growth of the decline and decay of the Reformation principle in Germany and over the continent, and I believe it is scarcely possible to produce a single orthodox system of divinity, compiled by any of the foreign divines, whether in Holland, Germany, Switzerland or France—it would *be scarcely possible to produce a single orthodox system of divinity*, in which the divine obligation of the Sabbath is not broadly and unequivocally maintained.”

In support of this affirmation of Dr. Candlish, we quote the following words of Calvin, who has often been held up to the public as maintaining lax views respecting the Christian Sabbath: “That blessing of the seventh day is the *solemn consecration of it*, by virtue of which God claims for himself the labors and occupations of men. God, therefore, first rested, then he blessed that rest, that it might be sacred among men, through all coming ages; he consecrated each seventh day to rest, that his own example might continually serve as a rule.

“When we are told, he adds, that the Sabbath was abolished by the coming of Christ, we must distinguish what belonged to the perpetual guidance of human life, and what was peculiar to the ancient figures, which were no longer needed when the truth was fulfilled. So far as the Sabbath prefigured these, I say it was temporal; but as being enjoined upon men from the beginning of the world, that they might exercise themselves in the worship of God, it ought undoubtedly to continue to the end of the world. And again, God in his own mercy, consulting our infirmity, sets apart one day from the rest, and commands it to be kept free from all earthly cares and employments, lest anything should interrupt that holy exercise.”

The following is the opinion of Bucer, who was an associate of both Calvin and Luther: “Since our God, with singular goodness towards us, has sanctified one day in seven for the quickening of our faith, and so of life eternal, and blessed that day, that the sacred exercises of religion on it might be effectual to the promotion of our salvation, he verily shows himself to be a wretched despiser, at once of his own salvation, and of the wonderful kindness toward us, and therefore utterly unworthy of living among the people of God, especially since God has granted six days for our works and employments, by which we may support and present life to his glory.”